**Coal blocks offered to JSMDC**

1784. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of coal blocks offered to Jharkhand State Mineral Development Corporation (JSMDC) for mining;

(b) the reserves, block-wise; and

(c) how many reserves have attracted private investors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) No coal block as yet has been offered to Jharkhand State Mineral Development Corporation for mining.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

(c) Out of 128 coal mining blocks/sub-blocks (CIL-121 and SCCL-7) identified for captive mining, 27 coal blocks stand allotted to private/public companies as on date.

**IIT Professor's Claim to Extract Gold from Sea Water**

1785. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware about the claim made in Business Standard of 17th February by a former IIT Professor Shri J.P. Aggarwala regarding extraction of gold from sea water around half the existing price of gold and that a plan for producing 50 kg. of gold a day will cost around Rs. 2 crore; and

(b) if so, what are the views of Government in this regard and whether this technology is proposed to be utilized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, neither IIT Kharagpur nor Department of Science and Technology is aware of any patent having been filed regarding Shri Aggarwala's claim for extraction of gold from sea water.